

REPORT OF THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

The Downtown Revitalization Committee (DRC) is now in its fourth year of working toward its goal of building a multi-use, multi-generational park in the center of Alton village, **The Alton B&M Railroad Park**. We are very proud to say that much has been accomplished through the efforts of not only the committee members, but also through many generous donations of money, time, equipment and labor by the townspeople of Alton

The (one time only) seed money that was approved at the Town Meeting was expended for a full-color brochure, for securing the services of an historic architect and matching funds for potential grants.

A grant from the Clough/Morrill trust provided the initial funding for the Walking Path, and a special Caboose Fund provided funds for moving the 1921 B&M Caboose onto its permanent "track" site in October 2005. In December 2005 the DRC was the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from the Meredith Village Savings Bank. These funds were used to begin building the Wetlands Boardwalk.

The DRC has also been awarded grants from the State of New Hampshire through the Moose Plate Program and through the Rails Trails Program for the construction of the Walking Paths and the Wetlands Boardwalk, and from the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region (the DeLong family, Appleton, WI). The Alton New Durham Lions Club also presented the DRC with a \$1,000 donation. A \$10,000 grant for the Toddler Playground was also received from the Cogswell Benevolent Trust in December 2006.

As a result of grant funds and the many donations of labor, equipment and money, several of our goals for 2006 were realized. After several months and long hours of demanding weather conditions, the Wetlands Boardwalk was completed. Volunteers from the Alton Centennial Rotary Club and committee members began construction of the Walking Path as a joint effort during a "spring workday". The Appalachian Mountain Teen Project also worked several days cleaning up the area along the Walking Path.

Donations to the park project were also used to furbish the 1860's freight building, including: replacing sections of sills and roof, new shingles, new vertical boards, new clapboards, completing the work on the gable ends, coats of new paint and new signs. The work on this building today totals over 700 volunteer hours donated by committee members and community volunteers.

Grant money and donations are now being sought to complete the Toddler's Playground (\$10,000-\$15,000), which is handicap accessible, fixed game tables, permanent grills, and for the construction of the grassy volleyball and badminton courts. In the coming months the DRC also need to raise \$6,000-\$8,000 for the freight building platforms, railings and handicap access ramp (built to federal handicap regulations). Park project funds are NOT generated from the town revenues; donations are always welcome and are tax-deductible.

As an additional way to raise funds, the DRC has created an Alton Railroad themed pewter medallion and a 2007 Alton Railroad photo calendar. Both are available at Town Hall and the Gilman Library and at participating businesses throughout town, or by contacting a committee member.

We invite you to take a walk through the park to check out the changes and improvements we are all creating together at the Alton B&M Railroad Park.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Downtown Revitalization Committee

Judy Fry, Chairman

Bonnie Barsanti, Recorder

Norman Crawford

Marty Cornelissen, Supervisor of Construction

Deanna O'Shaughnessy, Grant Writer

Nancy Merrill, Recorder

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